

Remember Me This Way

by Serendipity

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:)

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> <meta name="GENERATOR"> Remember Me This Way

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> <p>

Title: Remember Me This Way
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>Dist: Ask and you shall receive
Disc: All the characters belong
to Joss Whedon.
>Summary: It's incredibly short :)

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> <p>Giles knew. <p>

He knew from the instant this whole mess began.

He didn't need to see the idiotic 400 year old sketch they had found, quite by accident, of a couple looking strikingly similar to the slayer and her vampire. He didn't need to look at the passage referring to their 'true love' and how they were 'soul mates'. He didn't need to look at the subsequent sketchings of the pretty blonde girl with flowers in her hair and a bright smile on her face. He didn't need to read the graceful writing in which their tragic love story was related as well as the spell that was cast to always keep them together.

He didn't need to do any of those things to know that it was all

complete nonsense.

The book, the pictures, the story, were all real enough. Yes, it was true that the tragic couple had lived and loved and died. And yes, it was true that they were destined to be resurrected time and time again in order to find one another. It was even true that they were soul mates, that they were lovers, that they were love's perfection.

But Giles didn't need to know any of those things to understand what was right in front of his eyes.

He knew.

Perhaps it was the softness around the eyes of the blonde picture-girl or the delicate turn of her mouth. Maybe it was just the gentle sloping tilt of her writing. It didn't really matter what it was, but Giles knew. He knew the identity of the girl in the pictures. It wasn't the girl standing in front of him, tugging on her boyfriend's leather jacket. It wasn't the slender blonde cooing seductively in the dark vampire's ear. It wasn't Buffy.

It was Willow.

It was the slight girl sitting in the corner, her eyes downcast to hide her devastation. Her red hair curtained over her face to hide the wetness of her tears.

And Giles didn't need to see the look on Willow's face when she glanced up at Buffy and Angel. He didn't need to watch her grimace in pain and withdraw whenever the vampire touched the other girl.

He knew.

He knew she had recognized herself in those pictures. He knew she was starting to remember her countless pasts. He knew that she was trying to suppress all of her feelings in order to make them happy. He knew it was hurting her more intensely than anything she had experienced in her young life.

And as for the diary itself, well, he hadn't needed to see the barely concealed shock and recognition on her face when he had read aloud the entries. He hadn't needed to hear her gasp when he mentioned the crimson circular birthmark that marked the two lovers. He hadn't needed to look to know that she was scarred by such a mark on her upper right thigh.

She was the girl. She was the one. Blonde hair in one lifetime, red in another. It made no difference. The resemblance to Buffy was unfortunate given their current circumstances, but it really had no effect on the present.

And as the sun began to set and the other occupants of the library began to go home, he didn't need to see her slump over in anguished exhaustion to know the pain she was going through. He didn't need to watch her fall into a fitful and dreamless sleep, her head resting beside her keyboard, to know what was plaguing her thoughts. He didn't need to look on as she moaned and shifted violently, trying to claw away the memories which were causing her pain. He didn't need to do any of those things because he knew the unfairness of it all.

He knew how unfair it was to gaze upon something that was unreachable, unthinkable and untouchable. He knew how unfair it was to have arrived too early, tread too cautiously and missed too much to have any affect.

He knew all of those things because he had to.

And as he gently covered her with a blanket from his office and brushed her tangled red hair out of her face, he also knew that she would heal. He knew that she was strong and that she was resilient. No matter what happened, she would be able to deal with it and even, perhaps in time, to be happy.

And as for the yellow rose he left by her head before he left her to her slumber, well, that was just to help ease her pain when she awoke. It would lift her spirits. It would make her laugh.

Because Giles didn't need to ask to know that yellow roses were her favorite. He didn't need to see the sparkle in her green eyes when she awoke and held up the delicate flower to know that she loved it.

He already knew. He knew because he remembered the way one had made her smile when he had placed it in her long golden hair. On that cold autumn morning.

So very long ago.

**

The End

End
file.